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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2561
INFO RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE IMMEDIATE 3759
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN IMMEDIATE 0191
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES IMMEDIATE 3967

UNCLAS ROME 000968

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

PASS TO: EAP/MLS LAURA SCHEIBE

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - ADDING "SENSITIVE" CAPTION

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ITALY'S STRONG REACTION TO AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S
CONVICTION

REF: STATE 83598

11. (U) Poloff delivered reftel demarche on welcoming Italy's strong and non-partisan condemnation of Aung San Suu Kyi's conviction on August 19 to MFA Southeast Asia Office Deputy Head, Fabio Schina. Schina confirmed FM Frattini's public statement that "Since this fresh sentence will prevent Mrs. Suu Kyi from participating in the elections planned for 2010, I consider it a serious breach of democratic principles." Further, the MFA states that "Within the context of the European Union, and in complete agreement with the efforts of Special Representative for Myanmar, the Hon. Fassino, Italy supports the need for a firm and unequivocal common response to the military junta's decision. This response would also include strengthening the targeted sanctions currently in force against that regime. Italy will continue to do its part in all international forums, working in support of the UN Secretary General and of the regional Asian organizations...toward the release of Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi and the regime's other political prisoners..."

12. (SBU) Comment: The GOI's immediate and forceful reprobation of the Burmese military junta's guilty verdict of the Nobel laureate is a strong indication of unified support across Italy's broad, often fractious, political spectrum. As a voice coming from the opposition Left, Special Representative/Envoy Fassino harmonized that it was an "unjustified verdict" that could not go unpunished.

DIBBLE